



## The Tennessee Human Rights Commission

The mission of the Tennessee Human Rights Commission is to safeguard individuals from discrimination through enforcement and education.

The Commission is an independent state agency responsible for enforcing the Tennessee Human Rights Act and the Tennessee Disability Act and coordinating the State of Tennessee's compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This is accomplished through a staff of investigators, attorneys and other professional support personnel.

### Humble Beginnings

- September 30, 1963: Governor Frank G. Clement signed Executive Order 18 creating the Tennessee Human Relations Commission.
- 1967: Legislature created the Tennessee Commission on Human Development. This absorbed the duties of the previous Commission, adopted rules and regulations to govern its proceedings and added a prohibition against **sex** discrimination.

### Growth and Transformation

- 1978: The Tennessee Human Rights Act (THRA) became law which transformed the Commission from an advisory to an enforcement organization with powers to investigate, conciliate and litigate claims of discrimination.
- 1979 & 1980: Amendments to THRA expanded protections to include **disability** and **age**.
- 1983: The name officially became the Tennessee Human Rights Commission (THRC).
- 1984: Provisions prohibiting discrimination in housing were added and in 1990, the housing provisions were expanded to include protections based on **familial status** and **disability**.

### Strong Foundation

- The Commission has partnerships with - the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (since 1979) and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (since 1994). These partnerships allow THRC to extend federal protections to persons alleging discriminations.
- The Commission is comprised of a 15 member Board of Commissioners and a staff of 29 in four offices- Nashville, Memphis, Chattanooga and Knoxville.

### Continued Progress

- 2009: Expansion of the THRA gave the Commission the authority to ensure all state departments and agencies who receive federal funding comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Today, the Tennessee Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on **race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, familial status and national origin in employment, housing and public accommodation**.
- The Commission's primary function is to receive, mediate, investigate, conciliate and when necessary litigate allegations of discrimination and educates the public (citizens, employers, realtors, providers of public accommodations') about their rights and responsibilities.

## THRC Programs

- Investigation of Discrimination Complaints
  - Housing, Employment & Public Accommodation
- Mediation services
  - Provided free of charge to all complainants
- Title VI Compliance Program
  - Ensure all state agencies receiving federal funds are in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Education & Outreach
  - Public Roundtable Discussions
  - Employment Law Seminars
  - Fair Housing Seminars
  - Participate in Community Events as speakers and exhibitors.

### We've Moved! New Central Office Location:

Tennessee Human Rights Commission  
Tennessee Tower, 312 Rosa L Parks Ave, 23<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Nashville, TN 37243

1-800-251-3589 [www.tn.gov/humanrights](http://www.tn.gov/humanrights)

## During the 2012-2013 Fiscal Year...

